THE

Unlucky Citizen;

OR,

A Pleasant History of the

LIFE of

Black Tom, &c.



Read, but don't Practice,
For the Author finds,
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Have most quiet Minds.

London, Printed by *J. M.* for *J. Blare* at the *Looking-Glass* on *London-Bridge*, 1685.

VX



XV

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Giving an exact Account of all his Witty and Unparallel'd Rogueries.

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This may be Printed, R. P.

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BIBLIOTHECA·BODLEIANA

THE BRITH OF Black Tom.

CHAP. I.

A Certain Merchant Trading to Venice, as he walk'd abroad in that Country, to view the Commodities that part of the World is most famed for: He meets near the Borders of a Neighbouring City two Men walking together, very angerly Discourling one with another. Now these two Men were Father and Son: The Father was so angry at his Son, that he was resolved to sell him the first opportunity. Now the Merchant was glad to hear these words, and

therefore ask'd him what he would take for him? who was very willing to take any small price, rather than be longer troubled with a disobedient Son. Who in short was Ship'd, and sold to an English Merchant, that brought him forthwith to London, where the Youth for some time liv'd Servant to a Lady, until he took a great fancy for a certain Neighbouring Girl, with whom he shortly after lost both Maiden-head and Service too: And now being Married to he knew not who, must work to maintain he knew not what. But mark what follows, at three quarters of a Years end, there came to Town a brave Black Boy, that brought his Dads none Nose, as well as his Nature with him, but Poverty and young Children always suit very ill; for the Parents had nothing now, but what they begg'd or stole, so that as the Child grew, still he learnt, until at last grown up, he was to the full, as ingenious as his Father was, and could bring home in one day, more than Father and Mother in a whole week, let them imploy their times never so well. Thus much for his Birth and Education.

CHAP.

CHAP. II.

How this Young **Tom** came to be known, and how he went by the Name of **Black Tom**; and what befell.

WHen Tom was grown to be a Man, as lusty and as strong a Thief as his Father, he told his Father he would now set up for himself; and when they were both agreed, Tom took his leave in the Evening, and went for Wapping, where he goes to a House standing nigh to the Thames: There he enter'd, and call'd for a Pot of Ale; and as he sat drinking his Ale, in the next Room were sitting very merrily over a Bowl of Punch, a Company of jovial Drunken Sea-men, which Tom observed to make a noise, he also falls to singing as well as they. The Sea-men observing him to be so merry a Fellow, call'd him in amongst them; and after he had saluted the Company, and drank a dish of Punch or two, they ask'd him to sing them a merry Song to pass the time away: But he cryed no, let's ra-

ther drink while we are by land, for you are always hard employ'd upon the Sea; which Proposal pleas'd the Seamen so well, that they oblig'd themselves to follow Tom's Example; who thereupon began so many Healths one after another, that the Seamen not being so fresh as he, by degrees fell fast asleep. Now Tom minding his opportunity, insensibly creeps to their Pockets, and takes away all the Money they had, and when he had discharg'd the Reckoning, took his leave of his Hostess and went off: but the Seamen waking, and missing their Money, began to curse and swear at the Black Dog most bitterly; and one of them remembring that his name was Tom, resolved to put him in the Gazette by the name of Black Tom, but they being almost Drunk, when he came first amongst them, that they could not remember what sort of Cloaths he wore, or whether his Visage was round or long, or his Body by stature tall or short. So that one of them coming one day by Charing-Cross, saw a Black behind a Gentlemans Coach, cryed out very eagerly to the Coach man to stop his Horses; and then eagerly running

ning to the Foot-man behind the Coach, lay'd hold on him, and causing a Constable to be call'd, had the poor Man before a Justice, and swore against him, That he was the very Man that rob'd him at such a time, and such a place: But the Youth making it appear that he was not there, but was employed on some business for his Lady, was clear'd, and the Man look'd upon as Mad.

CHAP. III.

How Black Tom committed a Robbery at St. Katherines, and how he came off.

After Tom and the Sea-men had parted, Tom takes a Boat, and rows to St. Katherines, where he lay three days before he heard of any thing fit for his purpose: At last entring into Discourse with his Landlady, Lord, Landlady, (says he) I admire some People that are Rich, and but few in Family, are not afraid to stay out of their Houses, especially by Night, so many loitering idle Fellows as lie here about! Indeed Sir, says she) I wonder as

as much as you do; but above all People in St. Katherines, I admire at my next Neighbour, that hath always good store of Plate, and Coin of Gold and Silver always by her, that she dares lye alone, or with none but a poor simple Girl, that is her Servant; especially having such a weak Old House, and by my truly, sometimes they both go out; and one perhaps has got the Key of the Door, and the other coming home, wanting the Key, will lift the Door off the Hinges: Which hath been done so often, that it comes off now without any noise. Indeed Landlady, (says Tom) 'tis a great Miracle to me, that they escape so well.

Now Tom being very glad of this News, after a small meditation what to do, tells his Landlady, That he was invited out, and should be pretty late before he could come in that Night, and therefore desires her not to sit up late for him, and so departed till toward Night, which time he imployed in viewing the House, to see how or where he might break in most easily. At last considering that his Landladys way was the best, he would stay till Night, and venture at the

the Door, therefore he goes to an Ale-house hard by, to spend his time. But not long after the Watch had passed by, crying the time of the Night, out goes Tom; who coming to the Door, and gently renches it off the Hinges, goes up the Stairs, and finding every body fast, opens a Coffer, in which was a Till or Drawer, from whence Tom takes an Hundred pounds, besides Jewels and Rings; so being very well contented with his prize, was preparing to go off, but the Watch was passing by, whose custome is to knock at the Doors, and if they be open, to call upon the People to shut them; but Tom was got without-side the Door, endeavouring to fasten it again. Now the Watch-men finding the Door off the Hinges, began to think that Mr. Thomas had committed a fault, and therefore took him into examination. Now Tom told them that it was his own House, and he had some occasion to go out, and could not find his Key until he had lifted the Door off the Hinges; and if they would not believe it was his House, they might come in, and he would make them drink for their pains. Now as 'tis not the custome of Watch-

men

men to deny drink at any time, they entered into the House: Now Tom taking down a Mug from the Shelf, and going to the Door, praying them not to make any noise, under pretention of going to fetch drink, ran quite away. Now the Constable having a Drunken Man that was scarce able to go with him, commanded one of the Watch-men to stay there with him, until Mr. Black Thomas should come in, and because the poor Man look'd like a Gentleman, should beg Mr. Black Thomas to lend him a Bed, so the Constable and part of the Watch departed. Now Mr. Black Thomas not returning, the Gentleman that was o'recome with drink fell fast asleep, and likewise the Watch-man being in the dark, and no body to talk to, fell fast asleep also; and slept soundly until the Morning, that the woman of the House finding her Coffer open, and her Money gone, came hastily down, and caused them to be seized, as Men guilty of Burglary and Robbery, and had them before the Justice, and he had committed them, had not the Constable and Watch come and cleared them. Thus Black Tom came off.

CHAP.

CHAP. IV.

How Black Tom served an Old Miser.

BLack Tom had not lain long still, but he deviseth a new Project to take him a Lodging at the Horse-Ferry in Westminster; he had not been above two days, but his Fingers itch'd to be at work. Now, there liv'd a certain watchman hard by, that had gotten a considerable quantity of wealth, who was an old dry Batchelor that liv'd alone, and one that liv'd more upon looking on his Coin, than making use on it; for he had at any time rather beg, then part with a Farthing of Money. Now Tom was plotting how he might get this Money from this old Miser: So Tom lay a bed most part of that morning contriving on his Pillar, but getting up, walks towards the Watch-mans House, where he found him standing at the door, makes several bows and cringes, and afterwards made him this Speech.

Gwide Maystre, Me non Inglant by mine Phace, none Inglant by mine Twang: Me de grecat strawnger of Aphric, me de pherry phull of Maney; me sa have van Hundred

Poonds

Poonds in mine Phocquet, no phlace to put it ſhale, you have de gwide Logings, let me de gwide me give gwide Maney.

The old Miſer lik'd this ſpeech very well, and was reſolved (as he was a Stranger) to make him pay dearly for his Lodging; ſo Black Tom gave him twenty ſhillings before-hand, and was to pay him twenty ſhillings every Saturday Night. But Black Tom had not been long there before the old Man was to go out upon the Watch, and that Night Black Tom conveyed a Coffer out of his Houſe, wherein the Old Man's Treaſure lay, and ne'r return'd to his Lodging more. The poor old Miſer returning home to his Houſe, and miſſing his Lodger and his Money, made a ſad lamentation, telling all his neighbours that Black Tom had Rob'd him, and he knew not where to find him, nor what to do. Now this old Man had a Friend that liv'd down in Whitechappel, that he was reſolved to complain to, thinking, that he being a Thief-catcher, might inform him of him that had wronged him; but as he went, who ſhould encounter him but Mr. Black Thomas, who he preſently commands to be laid hold

on,

on, and has him before a Justice. Now it hapned that this Justice had a Black-a-moor in his House that had not been long in England, and did not speak good English; and it hapned that this Black-a-moor comes to the door, of whom the Constable as'd, if the Justice were within? Who answered, Dat he was at team, put note at leeberdy, but dat he vill be if you stay but de little. So they stay'd a little time: now Black Tom was meditating how to come off, for he knew himself Guilty of what was laid to his charge, but remembring that he had acted or imitated the Speech of a Barbarian, so he being an English-man, was resolved how to come off. Now the Justice being come to them, the Miser made his Complaint thus: Sir, not much above five dayes since, this Black came to be my lodger, & the third night, he carried away my Coffer with two hundred Pounds in Gold; he is one that cannot well be understood, for he is an Out-landish Man, and speaks no English, and therefore hard to be understood. I, an out-landish man! says Tom, I was never out of *England* in my dayes, my Mother is an English Woman, but indeed, my Father was a Black

Born,

Born at Venice; but as for me, I speak nothing but English, nor never could. The old Miser hearing these Words, knew not what to think, whether this was the Man or no. But however, he remembring that the Justices Man that let him in was a Black, and spake but bad English, he told the Justice, that he could not be very positive, whether Tom was the Man or not, for since he came there, he fancied that it was his Black that did him that mischief. Now the Justice observing that the Miser accused both, and did not know if either were Guilty, freed them both. So Tom came very well off with this Watch-man also.

CHAP. V.

How Black Tom was too hard for the Watch-men at Ludgate and Cripplegate Wards.

HOnest Black Tom had a great desire to pass through the City, not at all doubting but he should find something or other that might be advantageous unto him; and in order to his enterprize, he walk'd

walk'd towards Ludgate. When he came there, the Watch offer'd to stop him, which caused him to ask them, why they were so rude, that no person though ever so civil or modest, could not pass the Streets? I will assure you that I am upon hasty business, and I will give the King an account of his Servants Behaviour, that they that should see that People went peaceably in the Streets, first break the Peace. Both Constable and Watch-men when they heard these words, began to tremble, making him as good a Speech as they could to excuse their boldness: Saying, Sir, by your Discourse, you seem to be the Kings Messenger, and we have, I confess, rudely imposed upon you. Now Sir, the reason of the Watch-mens attempt, was because they often do receive sixpence or a shilling of Gentlemen that pass by at this time of the Night, to make themselves drink. But now considering we have stopt your Honour so rudely, we therefore desire your Pardon for the Crime; and seeing it is so dark, and the Streets very dirty, you shall have two Men to light you along; and because the affront was so great, I my self will wait

upon you. Now Tom was very well pleas'd at this, seing as the Constable stod bare-headed to him, that the Fob had Ear-rings of a considerable value, Rings on his Fingers, and not at all doubting but he had Money in his pocket, was very willing to accept of his offer so alway they march together, with one Watch-man before them. Now they had not been gone far, but Tom began to sound his Horn, & draw out his Sword and Pistol, telling them, that if they offered to stir or make a noise, he would presently kill them, and bid them make haste to give him all their Money, Ear-rings and Rings, before his Comrades, for which he had sounded, came, or they would certainly be kill'd. Now the Constable being afraid that he had some Company hard by, presently delivered all he had: now the poor Watch-man had something, but it was but a naughty Groat; so Tom would not meddle with that, but bid them good-night, desiring them to remember Mr. Black Thomas, alway he went. Now the poor Watch-man and Constable returning to their Company, whom they found some asleep, and some talking how they would

dispose

dispose of the Money the Gentleman should give them; not doubting but he had given them five Shillings at least, since the Constable waited upon him; and one of them turning his head aside, he saw the Constable and the Watchman return'd, ; therefore he goes hastily to them smiling, which they perceiving at a distance, laid the Constables Staff a cross his Crown, asking him why he, above all the rest, should laugh or mock them for the ill fortune they had. Now to return to Black Tom, he was got down to Cripple-gate Ward, endeavouring to pass through there: But when he came, he found the Watch-men very rough with him also; telling him, that they very seldom let any pass through at that time of the Night, except they knew whether he went, and what his business is. Now Black Tom was very willing to impart his business to them; but presently drew out his Horn and blew round about him, then drew his Sword and Pistols: telling them, that he had Company hard by, that would presently rescue him; telling them, if they did not presently let him pass, they should all dearly pay for it: The Watch-men

began to tremble, and were very glad to let him go, believing that his Horn had summon'd a Company of desperate Fellows to cut all thier Throats, and were very glad that they had escaped. Thus did Black Tom escape the Watches, and having passed through most of the Watches in Town, till at last his name grew so famous, that every body almost knew Black Tom, and feared him. So that one Night there came a poor Black, that had been turn'd from his Service, and had been out of employment a long time, so long, that he had spent all his Money, and pawn'd most of his Apparel. This poor Fellow came up to the Gate, and the Watch-men asking who was there? he answered, Here's one, and holding up his head, he shewed his Face, which the Watch-men no sooner saw, but they cryed out, Here's Black Tom! Here's Black Tom! And so being frighted, gave room for the poor Black to enter, who would fain have ask'd them a question, but they being afraid of him, thinking it had been Black Tom, left the Watch-House, and him in it, who going to the Pitcher, drank a draught of Ale and went away.

Now

Now the Watch-men that fled for fear, by chance, met Black Tom below the Gate, that frighted them worse than they were before; but they thought it in vain to run away any farther, lest they should meet another Black Tom. But however stood still, not daring to ask him a word; and when he asked them, they answered him with the greatest reverence and caution imaginable: and while they were talking, the other poor Black came up, and seeing the Watch stand bare so to Black Tom, uncovered his Head also; and shewing his Face to Black Tom, Tom asked him in what condition he was? who presently told him all the Truth; that he was in great want, and no way at present to help it. But Black Tom told him he would help him, therefore commanded the Watch to unstring their Purses, and to give what they had to the poor Black, which the poor Black was glad to hear: but the poor Watch-men were very slow to deliver, but Tom bad them be very speedy, or he would run them through; wherefore they were fore'd to give all that they had, and so depart, and very glad they came off so too. Now Black

Tom

Tom took the poor Black along with him, and taught him his Trade, and so they passed on towards Ludgate Watch; when they came there, the Watch asked, Who came there? Black Tom answered, What was that to them; and one of them looking on him, said to the rest, It is Mr. Black Thomas, and then he passed through undisturb'd; and when he was gone, the Watch cryed one to another, I am glad he's gone: But Black Tom considering that his poor Companion had no more Money than that small matter he had from Cripple-gate Watch, goes back to Ludgate, and called for the Constable, who accordingly came; and when he came, he said, Good-morrow Sir, what is your Will with me? Sir, said Black Tom, I have a Friend decayed in the World, and is reduced to great need, and indigence, wherefore I would desire you to collect something of your Company, to give to maintain him on his Journey. Which the Constable willingly consented to, so collected of the Watch all the Money that they had, saying, If they did not give all they had, Black Tom would take it. So Black Tom having initiated his Friend in a way of Livelihood,

hood, left him, wishing him good prosperity, and desired to let him know how he prospered about a Twelvemonth hence, for he was going to turn Merchant Adventurer for Venice, and if he prospered any thing like, bad him come over, and Trafick with him as a Partner.

Thus have you heard the Rise of Mr. Black Thomas, by which Name, any one (whether Black or Chimney-Sweeper) may pass through all the Watches in London But advising them not to venture, I end my History.

FINIS.



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